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ASIA

The Provinces of China. Together with a History of the First Year of H. I. M. Hsuan Tung, and An Account of the Government of China. Reprinted from "The National Review" (China) as "The National Review Annual." 1910. With a Preface by Colonel C. D. Bruce. 179 pp., illustrations and indices. The National Review Office, Shanghai, 1910. 9 x 7½.

This is really a primer of Chinese national life, far in value above the unpretentious gazetteer which at first inspection it seems to be. It is very hard to say in a general definition what China really is, and without that definite knowledge of the present it is still more difficult to forecast what China is to become. But if a comprehension of the Middle Kingdom as a whole evades inquiry the detailed study of its component provinces must bring us closer to such knowledge. On that principle this work has been compiled. It does not profess to be original. Its authors have taken the best from the standard authors, they have drawn upon all records of information with due assignment of credit. Province by province they have sketched the natural and economic geography of the empire in a way which will serve to present valuable information at the point where it is directly valuable and at the same time to guide the inquirer to sources of further information. It pretends to be no more than a handbook, but the student of Chinese affairs will find it a valuable book to have at hand.

WILLIAM CHURCHILL.

Islam in China. A Neglected Problem. By Marshall Broomhall, B. A. xx and 332 pp., maps and illustrations, appendices and index. China Inland Mission, London, 1910. 7s. 6d. 10 x 6.

China's people are so numerous small wonder we had not noticed those five or ten millions of Mohammedans among them. Yet there is a mosque in every sizable city, thirty perhaps in Peking, schools for the teaching of Arabic, mullahs who speak Arabic, Chinamen who have pilgrimaged to Mecca, and Chinamen who pray toward Mecca with sacred, if uncomprehended, Arabic words. No province is without its Moslem contingent, though in Fukien, opposite Formosa, they number but a thousand. Fairly half the total of the Empire live in the western provinces, Kansu, which marches with Mongolia and Tibet and Yunnan on the Burman border.

The western Moslem is superior physically to the other Chinamen, straighter of eye, of strong nose and beard and better color. He is a cattle man where the Chinese are agricultural. He is skilful and courageous. Doubtless from these western borders the Mohammedans first entered the country. Two immigrations are probable: in the eighth century when Persia first succumbed to Arabian expansion and again by refugees from the devastations of Jenghis Khan. But Islam in China has lost memory of both occasions and sought to ally itself with the Prophet himself by a legend widely current that sends Mohammed's maternal uncle on a mission to Canton in 581 to 601 A. D. and has him build there the Mosque of the Holy Remembrance and the Smooth Pagoda. As Mohammed was born in 570 A. D. so early a Mohammedan mission starts investigation. Astronomical considerations fairly assure us of the invention of the legend in the fourteenth century, and even of the falsifying of the date of a monument at Sianfu, supposed to be of 742.

A hundred and fifty years ago the Moslems were equal before the law to other religionists in China, treated indeed with admirable liberality, but a series